

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
SSC-01 /067 W  
-----047641 090442Z /17

R 090414Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7353  
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 02875

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, TW  
SUBJECT: NEW CABINET LIKELY TO BE DISAPPOINTINGLY  
- UNCHANGED

1. DURING MAY 7 GOLF GAME AND LUNCH FOLLOWING, VICE  
FOREIGN MINISTER CHIEN FU AND SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO  
PREMIER JAMES SOONG DISCUSSED WITH CHARGE IN  
SURPRISINGLY CRITICAL TONE LIKELIHOOD THAT PUBLIC AND  
MEDIA WILL BE DISAPPOINTED WITH "NEW CABINET" OF SAME  
OLD FACES HEADED BY LACKLUSTER PREMIER.

2. BOTH MADE CLEAR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHO WILL BE  
PREMIER AND AGREED THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO DO KNOW ARE CCK  
AND POSSIBLY THE PREMIER-DESIGNATE, ASSUMING CCK HAS  
MADE FINAL DECISION. DESPITE SOONG'S ACCESS TO  
PREMIER, HE COMPLAINED THAT TO BE READY FOR PRESS WHEN  
ANNOUNCEMENT IS MADE, HE HAS HAD TO PREPARE BIO SKETCHES  
AND GATHER PHOTOGRAPHS ON ALL POSSIBLE CANDIDATES  
(I.E., CABINET AND CABINET-LEVEL OFFICIALS).

3. CHIEN COMMENTED THAT, MORE INTERESTING THAN THAT NO  
ONE KNOWS, IS THAT THERE ARE NO GOOD GUESSES. REASON IS  
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THERE IS NO OBVIOUS CANDIDATE. THEY ARE ALL TOO OLD  
AND EQUALLY UNQUALIFIED TO BE SUCCESSOR. I EXPRESSED  
SURPRISE, SAYING I THOUGHT CCK WAS NOT THINKING OF A  
SUCCESSOR AT THIS POINT. BOTH AGREED, BUT CHIEN ADDED  
THAT CCK SHOULD HAVE STARTED PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSOR  
"SIX YEARS AGO".

4. BECAUSE CCK HAS NOT SYSTEMATICALLY TESTED AND TRAINED NEW POTENTIAL LEADERS, CHIEN CONTINUED, ROC FACES SERIOUS LEADERSHIP PROBLEM. WHEN YOSHIDA WAS PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN, HE APPOINTED OVER 100 MINISTERS WHO HAVE PROVIDED POOL OF LEADERSHIP TALENT FOR LDP. IN HIS SIX YEARS AS PREMIER, CHIEN SAID, CCK HAS APPOINTED ONLY ABOUT 16 MINISTERS. ONE REASON IS CCK DOES NOT LIKE TO EXPERIMENT WITH PEOPLE, BUT MAJOR OBSTACLE TO MAKING HIGH-LEVEL CHANGES IS THAT CABINET-LEVEL OFFICIALS NEED THEIR PERQUISITES TO MAINTAIN MINIMUM STANDARD OF LIVING. THEREFORE CCK FEELS HE CANNOT MOVE MINISTERS OUT UNLESS HE HAS A PLACE TO PUT THEM. EVEN IN CASE OF PRESIDENT YEN, IT TOOK SPECIAL LEGISLATION (TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE PENSION AND LIFETIME PERQUISITES). RESULT, ACCORDING TO CHIEN, IS IT IS EASIER TO MAKE NO CHANGES. THIS IS WHY AVERAGE AGE IN CABINET HAS GONE FROM THE 40'S IN THE 1950'S TO THE HIGH 60'S TODAY.

5. ASKED IF THEY EXPECTED CCK TO MAKE MAJOR CHANGES IN CABINET AFTER INAUGURATION IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY AND TRAIN NEW LEADERS, BOTH REPLIED THIS WAS UNLIKELY. CCK KNOWS HE SHOULD THINK ABOUT A SUCCESSOR BUT FOR "CHINESE REASONS" CANNOT SEEM TO DO IT. CHIEN PREDICTED NO MORE THAN TWO CHANGES IN CABINET: EDUCATION MINISTER, WHO HAS NOT DONE WELL, AND POSSIBLY ONE OTHER  
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(FOREIGN MINISTER WILL NOT CHANGE). EVEN EDUCATION MINISTER WILL HAVE TO BE FOUND A COMFORTABLE PLACE. OTHER GOVERNMENT CHANGES WILL BE LIMITED TO PROMOTIONS HERE AND THERE. ACCORDING TO CHIEN, PUBLIC AND PRESS HAVE BEEN LED TO EXPECT SOMETHING MORE DRAMATIC EVER SINCE CCK'S DECISION TO BECOME PRESIDENT WAS ANNOUNCED. THEY ARE IN FOR DISAPPOINTMENT.

6. COMMENT: THESE UNCHARACTERISTICALLY FRANK COMMENTS REFLECT IN PART FRUSTRATION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT OVER CCK'S TENDENCY, PARTICULARLY EVIDENT OVER PAST FEW MONTHS, TO MAKE MAJOR DECISIONS WITHOUT CONSULTING OTHERS OR EVEN INFORMING HIS ADVISORS OF DIRECTION IN WHICH HE IS MOVING. IN CHIEN'S CASE, OF COURSE, FRUSTRATION MAY BE COMPOUNDED BY REALIZATION THAT DESPITE HIS AMBITION AND OBVIOUS QUALIFICATIONS, THE WAY IS BLOCKED BECAUSE CCK CANNOT OR WILL NOT DUMP HIS SUPERANNUATED COLLEAGUES. SULLIVAN

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## Message Attributes

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